

RAKKASAN REPORT

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Rakkasans Launch New Mortar Training

By Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

With the many tasks Soldiers are given on a day to day basis, it is important for Soldiers to take time out to hone the skills of their specific job.

To sharpen their skills Rakkasans of 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment conducted the Leader Rakkasan mortar certification course, April 4-7.

The objective of the training was to qualify all mortar squads in the battalion and integrate calling for fire.

This was the first time that this training has been conducted at the battalion level.

"We wanted to create a standard training cycle that culminates with

a live fire exercise," said 1st Lt. Ted Price, Mortar Platoon Leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment.

The training spanned four days and built on the knowledge the Soldiers already had on firing mortars as well as qualifying with them.

The course began with a general knowledge written exam on mortar firing followed by a fire direction center exam. The written exams are just the beginning of the training and can tell instructors exactly what the Soldiers know of their weapons.

The second day of training consisted of dry fire exercises. These exercises were used to get the Soldiers familiar with the procedures

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Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
1st Lt. Cody Brown, A Co., 1st Bn., loads 60mm ammunition during the Leader Rakkasan Mortar Certification Course.

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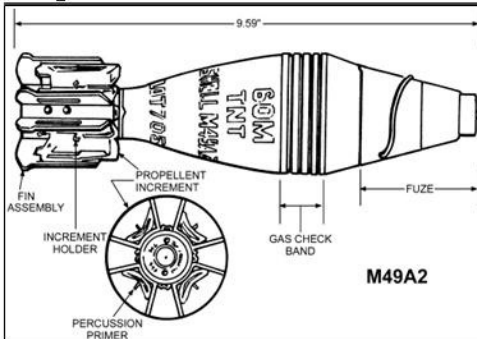
RAK 6 Notes

The past few months I've emphasized the importance of preparing for combat, focusing on getting yourself and your troopers ready to go. It's absolutely critical that every leader – at every level – understands that we have a limited number of days remaining before we deploy. We cannot afford to waste a single minute of a training day – once it's gone, we don't get it back. I am relying on leaders to make sure every training event is properly resourced, coordinated, and that our performance is measured against the established standard. We owe it to our Soldiers and their families to get them as ready as they can possibly be – you need to be **obsessed** with training your troops.

Part of getting ready for combat is getting your families ready as well. It's imperative that our spouses and children know what to expect, and that they utilize the Family Readiness resources available. The company FRG leaders are solid volunteers – and vital members of the team – and I encourage our families to be involved in your unit's group.

As we approach the summer months and the numerous associated outdoor activities, make sure you're enjoying your time off safely. Every Rakkasan is important to me, and we need the talent and effort of the entire team to win.

RAKKASAN!



Mortar

that were used in the next two days of live fire exercises.

The last two days of the training incorporated live fire exercises with calling for fire. This was the qualification part of the training where the Soldiers conducted day and night fire exercises.

The new standard of training was created because of the inconsistency of the old training.

"The old training was conducted at company level, when they were able to set time aside," said Price. "This new training is conducted at the battalion level, so everyone is trained together and at the same standard."

Along with every Soldier being trained the same way, supplies are also easier to obtain when the training is consolidated.

"Companies would have to try to find ammo and space for the old training," said Price, "Now with the

training ran this way, we can obtain the completion of successful missions. enough space and ammo for the entire battalion."

With the training ran on a four day schedule, Soldiers can focus on the mortar aspect of their job without conflicting with their other Soldier tasks.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Johnson, Mortar Platoon Sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, the many tasks of a mortar platoon are continuously growing.

As a member of a mortar platoon, Soldiers work hand in hand with infantryman. They must be able to complete the same tasks infantryman do, but their job doesn't end there.

"My Soldiers have learned how to clear rooms, react to direct and indirect fire and other (infantryman) tasks," said Johnson, "With this training my Soldiers can focus strictly on their jobs."

"Knowing the skills of the Soldiers around them makes my Soldiers more versatile," said Johnson, "We have the best of both worlds."

Although learning the skills of their colleagues is important, mortar platoons have an important job to do and ample time for training to polish their skills is imperative to

"We are responsive to the commander's needs," said Johnson. "Although our job isn't exciting like kicking down doors we play a major part in the success of the mission."

Time set aside for mortar platoons to focus on their skills was the driving force behind this new training.

"Because of the way we fight, every Soldier has to be a master of their skills along with being an expert Sol-

dier," said Price.

"We will be in serious hurt if we lose our focus, so it is important that we enable Soldiers to focus on their skills with little distraction."



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
Spc. David George, B Co., 1st Bn., checks his sight as Pfc. Michael Jackson, B Co., 1st Bn., waits to set the left guide markers.

3rd BCT Public Affairs Staff

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We welcome the submission of news items, articles, and photographs. Submissions should be made to the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 6760 A Shau Valley Rd., Ft. Campbell. Items may be telephoned to (270) 798-6542 or emailed to jesse.riggin@campbell.army.mil.

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Leader Battalion Invades IMPACT Training



Photos by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Rakkasans of 1st Battalion are conducting IMPACT training April 4-21. The Soldiers learn techniques such as close quarters combat and breaching. The training is aimed to prepare Soldiers for the environments that they will encounter while deployed. Instructors for this event recently completed the regimental IMPACT training. They are training their Soldiers to build cohesion and trust between the units so in a real life situation they can complete the mission successfully.

Soldiers On Two Wheels Must Practice Safety

By Ralph A. Stuck

3rd BCT Tactical Safety Specialist

It's that time of year! Testosterone levels rise and normally sane people start mumbling things like "more power" and "I've got the need, the need for speed." They appear to lose track of their surroundings whenever they hear a motorcycle. Girlfriends, wives, boyfriends, husbands, kids, friends keep finding them drooling outside the plate glass windows of the bike shops.

Things to think about;

You're a novice. - Like it or not, if you just started riding, got a different bike, or haven't ridden since last year, you're a novice! The first six months are extremely dangerous. Want to improve your odds? Military members must complete a Rider Course before they can register their motorcycles on base.

Your bike needs TLC. - Although mechanical problems only account for 2% of mishaps, they account for the majority of the time spent sitting on the side of the road. Make sure to check brakes, cables, tires (wear and air), lights, mirrors, and the impressive horn.

Looks are everything. - Not only should motorcyclists look *good* when they ride, but also the clothing should be functional. Helmet and eye protection (face shield, or goggles if the bike has a windshield) are a must. Long pants, long sleeved shirts, over the ankle shoes or boots, and gloves will protect you from sun/wind burn, suicidal bugs and rocks, plus

reduce the area requiring skin grafts if you forgot the rubber side goes down.

Sky, ground, sky, ground, sky, ground. - Before this becomes the narration of your next trip (pun intended), give some thought to your helmet. Helmets should, at a minimum, meet DOT standards, fit snugly, have a strong strap with a two-ring fastener, and be free of defects or cracks.

Riding on the rocks. - Alcohol and bikes just don't mix. Riding after drinking reduces reaction time and impairs judgment.

Don't let this happen to you!!!

Fort Campbell Safety Office hosts an Advance Motor Cycle Safety Course every Wednesday 0730-UTC at the parking lot next to Gate 3. For more information contact Mr. Bill Gleason at (931) 801-9565 (cell phone).

Not sure where to find the correct standards for operating a motorcycle:

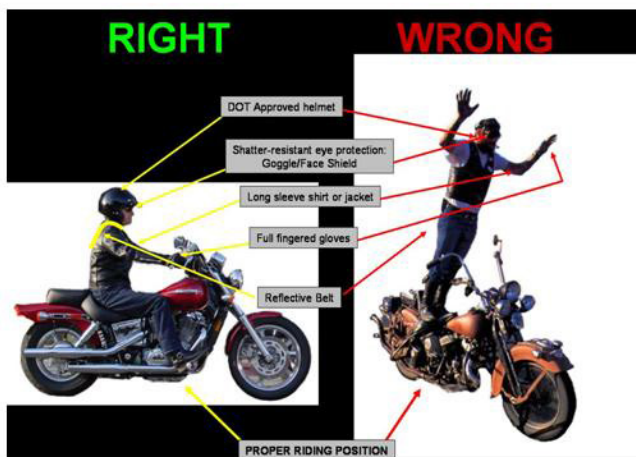
AR 385-55, B3 Motorcycle Safety.

DODI 6055.4 Traffic Safety.

CAM REG 190-5, Motor Vehicle Traffic Regulation.

CAM REG 385-7, Vehicle Accident Prevention.

Or contact Mr. Stuck, RAK Safety Office at 798-7006.



Family Readiness Brief

April 17th through 23 is National Volunteer week. The Volunteer of the Year Ceremony to say thanks to Ft Campbell's volunteers will be held on the 26th of April, at Cole Park Commons from 1830-2030. Listed below are the "RAKKASAN" volunteers who will be recognized that night. We want to say congratulations and thank you to each of them for all they do each day to support the Soldiers and families of the RAK-KASANS and Ft Campbell.

Cherrieann Diaz	3 rd BCT
Rachel Womack	1 st Battalion,
	187 th Infantry Regiment
Kristi Dees	3 rd Battalion,
	187 th Infantry
Stephanie Brannon	2 nd Battalion,
	187 th Infantry
Stephanie Madden	81 st Brigade
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